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THE INDICATIONS  
OF  
A DIVINE PURPOSE  
TO MAKE  
OUR COUNTRY  
A  
MODEL CHRISTIAN REPUBLIC.

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A DISCOURSE  
DELIVERED ON THE DAY OF  
ANNUAL THANKSGIVING,  
NOVEMBER 30TH, 1854.,

BY  
SHERMAN B. CANFIELD,  
PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, IN SYRACUSE.

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SYRACUSE:  
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SYRACUSE, December 5, 1854.

REV. S. B. CANFIELD,

DEAR SIR:—

Having had the pleasure of listening to the excellent sermon delivered by you in this city on Thanksgiving day, (30th ult.) we beg leave to solicit a copy for publication.

We think the particular subject discussed by you in that discourse, one of much public importance and that it was treated in a very candid, able and judicious manner.

Not only those who heard it will be glad to peruse and preserve it for future reference. but we doubt not, it will be highly useful and instructive to others.

With great respect, your friends and ob't serv'ts,

JAMES R. LAWRENCE,	ALBERT A. HUDSON,
M. D. BURNET,	H. W. VAN BUREN,
ALLEN MUNROE,	HENRY A. DILLAYE,
RUSSELL HEBBARD,	D. P. WOOD,
ROBERT GERE,	T. B. FITCH,
HENRY GIFFORD,	E. B. WICKES,
H. RHOADES,	A. WESTCOTT.

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SYRACUSE, Dec. 12th, 1854.

TO MESSRS. JAMES R. LAWRENCE, MOSES D. BURNET, ALLEN MUNROE, RUSSELL HEBBARD, ROBERT GERE, HENRY GIFFORD, H. RHOADES, ALBERT A. HUDSON, H. W. VAN BUREN, HENRY A. DILLAYE, D. P. WOOD, T. B. FITCH, E. B. WICKES, and A. WESTCOTT:

Gentlemen—

In complying with your request of a copy of my Thanksgiving Sermon for publication, I leave the question of the fitness of the Discourse, for such an unexpected honor, entirely to your own judgment.

Yours respectfully,

S. B. CANFIELD.





## DISCOURSE.

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Acts xvii, 26.—“AND HATH MADE OF ONE BLOOD ALL NATIONS OF MEN FOR TO DWELL ON ALL THE FACE OF THE EARTH ; AND HATH DETERMINED THE TIMES BEFORE APPOINTED, AND THE BOUNDS OF THEIR HABITATION.”

The apostle of the Gentiles, thus expounding the first principles of Religion to the Athenians on Mars' Hill, is a study for lovers of the moral-sublime. The man in the light of his antecedents and of his present mission, uttering such truths, in such a place and before such an audience, thrills us with the grandeur of a purpose of life kindled by the breath of Love Incarnate, of a courage born of faith looking to the Invisible, of a beauty of holiness rising far above the sphere of un-spiritualized taste.

Though Athens strove no more for naval and military supremacy as when led by the counsels of Themistocles and Pericles, and struggled no longer for national independence as when awakened by the thunders of

Demosthenes, yet, even while crouching to Imperial Rome, she retained a sway more august than the dominion of arms. She was the metropolis of the wide domain of the Greek civilization. To her pertained the glory of poets, orators, philosophers and historians, whose names, to all time, were to be stars in the firmament of literature; and the honor—as unevangelized men counted honor—of a most credulous and graceful devotion to idols; and of her were the splendid memorials of that art which had given the semblance of life to a multitude of the dead who shone forth on every hand in forms of beauty and majesty, like “children of the resurrection.” The radiant point of an æsthetic and fascinating superstition, she was the great university-city of Gentilism,—the favorite resort of Greeks and Romans who sought to learn what the most celebrated instructors could teach.

In that city how strange a visitant was Paul! Not to finish his education, not to gaze at statues, pictures and temples, not to consult far-famed teachers, was he there. Proficient in the literature of the Greeks, and long a pupil of Gamaliel—the great doctor of the Hebrew Institutes—he did indeed appreciate mental culture and discipline in every form of excellence. But a splendor from heaven, a light above the brightness of the sun, had shone upon him; a Greater than all the philosophers and Rabbis had become his teacher; and rapt to the third heaven, he had beheld a city more grand and enduring than Athens, a temple of more imposing magnificence and beauty than the Parthenon and living forms more glorious than Grecian genius ev-

er conceived. Thus graduated amid the lights of the Paradise of God and conversant with the citizenship of heaven, he had come through a wide circle of nations, to the city where thirty-thousand gods were adored; where the world was thought to be parcelled out into sections ruled—if by Divine power at all—by local deities, and peopled by distinct races of men tracing their lineage to separate sources; and where Socrates had perished for attempting a religious reform far short of “turning the world upside down.” The discourse of which the text is a very significant part, is remarkable for its combination of courteousness of manner, felicity of argument and boldness of aim. Mighty in every word with vital truth, it was full of hits dealt as by the hand of the “Unknown God,” smiting now the follies of the superstitious crowd and anon the impious dogmas of the Epicureans and the Stoics. Glancing over a “city full of idols” the apostle proclaimed the Unity of God and the absurdity of image-worship. Beholding here the temple of Mars, there the Parthenon, and far and near structures deemed the abodes of divinities, he said: “The Lord of heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands.” In the presence of philosophers who under a very thin guise of polytheism taught a virtual atheism or pantheism, involving a denial of the existence or of the personality of the Deity and therefore of his providential and moral government, he declared the ceaseless, designed beneficence, control and authority of the omnipresent Provider and almighty Ruler, who “giveth to all life and breath and all things,” and “hath appointed a

day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." And in the hearing of men who claimed for the Athenians an origin distinct from the rest of the race, and who ignored the hand of the Most High in ordering the times and places of families and peoples, he emphatically asserted

THE UNITY OF THE HUMAN SPECIES ;

and

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD IN APPOINTING TO THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH SEVERALLY, THE ERAS OF THEIR EXISTENCE AND THE BOUNDS OF THEIR HABITATION.

These two truths I propose to view, first for a moment separately, and then in connection, taking their blended lights as a guide in considering

THE INDICATIONS OF GOD'S PURPOSE IN RESPECT TO OUR COUNTRY.

The affirmation that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," is in accordance with the historical fact that the Creator has caused "all nations of men," on whatsoever part of "the face of the earth," to descend from Adam and has made all the individuals thereof after the mental and physical likeness of their progenitor. It thus vindicates the propriety of the law of reciprocal obligation laid upon all men everywhere—of the Great Commandment "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," with the direction of every caviller to the parable of the Good Samaritan for the meaning of the word

neighbor—of the Golden Rule uniting the highest and the lowest, and repressing arrogance by making its very exorbitance the measure of duty to others. And it thus sanctions the leading principle in the Declaration of American Independence—the principle of the substantial equality of all men and of their natural right to liberty.

This principle, at the foundation of our temple of freedom and engraven on its front, is opposed to UNPHILANTHROPIC PATRIOTISM.

The love of liberty which distinguished the Athenians in the days of their strongest opposition to aristocracy and monarchy, had no vitalizing, expansive power. It had no eye to view God as the one Father of Greeks and Barbarians, and the nations of the earth as made to be one brotherhood. Its appropriate motto would have been, not freedom for all, but "LIBERTY FOR THE GREEKS AND ESPECIALLY FOR THE ATHENIANS."

This proud, self-isolating spirit, (which by the bye, did not die with the people just named) is as unlike the free spirit inculcated in the word of God, as a near-sighted sectionalism to the broadest philanthropy, or Satan to Christ. To love one's country for the sake of God and the world, endeavoring to render its power, wealth, intelligence and moral greatness honorary to the Father of Lights and beneficial to mankind, is a virtue. But there is a love of country which is narrow in its sympathies and mean in its ends, a mere expansion of selfishness, egotism pluralized and intensified. Under its malign influence



“Lands intersected by a narrow frith  
Abhor each other. Mountains interpos'd  
Make enemies of nations who had else  
Like kindred drops been mingled into one.”

This kind of patriotism has been much more common than the other. It is congenial to the heart of fallen man. From it have come wars; and from wars, the exaltation and tyranny of the few and the depression and servitude of the many.

The great truth that God “hath made of one blood all nations of men” strikes at the root of this vile plant which the heavenly Father never planted, and puts an extinguisher on the flame of a selfish and spurious love of liberty.

The most truly republican book ever written is the Bible. By tracing the descent of all nations to the same source, and declaring that they possess a common nature, made after the similitude of God and but little lower than the angels, and that they are alike involved in the ruins of the fall and invited to share without distinction of wealth, birth or country, in the transcendent privileges of sonship and heirship to the Most High, it shows that the pretensions of all oppressors prating of right divine, are both absurd and impious.

It is plain that the Book of books is not, as some have supposed, monarchical in its principles and spirit. It does, indeed, enjoin subjection to “the powers that be,” and discountenances, (as our Declaration of Independence also does,) attempts, for light and transient causes, to effect a change of government by force. But it

does not deny the right of revolution. When the people of any country for good reasons overturn one government and set up another, the very fact evinces that the former government was not a true exponent of the actual "powers" of that country. For example, the real powers in England in 1649 were not with Charles the First but with the men who called him to account for his crimes; and when the Royalists said: "Men ought to be subject to the higher powers: the powers that be are ordained of God," the advocates of the Commonwealth very properly replied, "Be subject to them then; and adhere no longer to the fallen house of Stewart." So in our own country in 1776, the powers were not in the representatives of George the Third and the Tories, but in the people who declared their independence and maintained it. It is the POWERS that BE, which are ordained of God,—not shadows—not names whose significance has passed away,

If we are commanded to honor the king, so are we to "honor all men,"\*—all at least to whom, under whatever title, the legislative, the judicial and the executive powers of civil government are entrusted. It is evident that the word rendered king, was used in this instance as in some others, in the sense of supreme magistrate or highest civil ruler, without reference to his specific title or mode of appointment to office. For over those strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Proconsular Asia and Bithynia, there was no single

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\* I Pet., ii, 17.

person then reigning under the name of king. That title, abhorred by the Romans from the days of the Tarquins, had never been resumed by their chief magistrates. The emperors, however despotic in fact, professed to derive their authority from the people. Most of the forms of the Commonwealth were still retained; and Tacitus tells us that it was the custom of the emperors to worship the people convened in the Circus; and that even Nero conformed to the usage. Whilst these facts prove that men who make a god of the people, have sometimes a very strange way of showing their adoring love, they demonstrate that the words of the apostle under review, are a bad proof-text for *jure divino* royalism. The sway of the Cæsars was an audacious DEMAGOGY, a thing farthest possible from an authority claimed as from God without regard to the will of the governed. According to the Scriptures, civil government, in its substance, is of God; in its form, of men. The apostle Peter styles kings and deputies human ordinances. When the people of Israel had determined to have a king, the prophet Samuel was commanded by Jehovah to protest against the act as a great sin; and a violent thunder-storm was miraculously sent to authenticate the protest.

Nor does the Bible commend Slavery. It does indeed direct servants to be obedient to their masters; but this no more authorizes a person to treat his fellow-men as chattels, than our Lord's precept "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," licenses the ruffian to

strike the blow.\* Meek submission to wrong for Christ's sake, is one thing; the infliction of the wrong though with quotation of Scripture about the sufferer's duty to submit, is quite another. God enjoins it upon masters to render to their servants "that which is just and equal"; and it is as clear as the light of noonday that when all masters shall obey this precept, practicing the Golden Rule, and cordially remembering that the Creator hath made of one blood all nations of men, there will not be enough left of slavery to be a very peculiar or a very hurtful institution.

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\* The word (*doulos*) rendered servant does not always mean SLAVE, i. e. "one [says the Louisiana Civ. Code, Art. 35] who is in the power of his master; [so that] the master may sell him, dispose of *his person*, his industry and his labor; [so that] he can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire anything but what must belong to his master."

Paul, James, Peter, Jude, each a freeman of the Lord, styled himself a *servant* (*doulos*) of Jesus Christ. Rom, i, 1; James, i, 1; 2 Pet., i, 1; Jude, 1.

How slight a degree of subjection the word sometimes denotes is evident from 1 Ki., xii, 7, Sept. The old men said to King Rehoboam, "If thou wilt be a *servant* (*doulos*) unto this people this day, and wilt serve them and answer them and speak good words to them, then will they be thy *servants* (*douloi*) forever."

Thus Rehoboam would be the servant (*doulos*) of his own subjects, by merely "answering them and speaking good words to them," i. e. by lightening their burdens; and they (treated as Israelites deserved) would be his servants (*douloi*) by not casting off entirely his government,

Like our word servant, *doulos* has a very wide range of signification.

Nor was a *master* (*kurios*) of course a *slaveholder*. "Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him "*kurion*." 1 Pet., iii, 6. As *doulos* sometimes expresses but a slight degree of subjection, so *kurios* sometimes implies but a slight degree of control.

I am happy in being able to say that our General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church has borne a uniform and decided testimony against the

The theory of American freedom was derived from the word of God. The Declaration of Independence, though drawn up by Mr. Jefferson in the summer of 1776, contains no great principles which had not long been familiar and dear to Christians, and especially to Calvinistic Christians, from the North to the South. During the two preceding centuries those principles had been enunciated by Genevan and Puritan reformers; and in substance they had severally been sounded out in various parts of our country and been adopted in town meetings and county conventions, before they were combined and set forth in the grand National Declaration.\* Then

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system of American Slavery as defined in the laws of the slaveholding States;—more than this, that during the whole of the protracted discussion of the subject in 1850, not a single member even from the South advocated or attempted to justify slavery as described in those laws. It was something else than slavery thus defined, that any one tried to defend. A member of the Assembly from Va., (discarding *the* thing known to codes, statutes and civil courts,) defined slavery to be “the investing of one person with power over another without his consent.” The Bible and the laws of the Free States sanction this; for they sanction “the investing” of a father “with power over” his child without the latter’s “consent;” the schoolmaster “with power over” his pupil, without the pupil’s “consent,” &c., &c. &c.

Good men sometimes deceive themselves by showing that Scripture sanctions one thing, and then transferring that sanction to something else of the same name but of a very different nature.

\* Those who would study the Genesis of American Independence, are referred to the Articles in Milton’s Prose Works, in defence of the execution of Charles I, particularly the treatise entitled “The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates,” which, besides his own noble thoughts, contains many quotations in point, from the writings of Evangelical reformers; to Bancroft’s History of the U. S., especially Vol. I, Chap.’s VIII, IX, X, and Vol. II, Chap. XVIII; and to De Tocqueville’s “Democracy in America,” particularly Chap. II.



at length were admirably wrought together the golden particles which high-souled, devout men had gathered in hope, from the sands of that "river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." Whilst the Bible sets forth and establishes on eternal rock, the rights of man, it enforces their observance by the most impressive sanctions and the most moving persuasives. And no other book so much as this, expands the minds and purifies the hearts of men so as to qualify them for freedom.

Taking along this first truth of the text,

THAT GOD IN THE BIBLE IS THE PATRON OF LIBERTY,

let us now consider the other great truth associated with it:

THAT THE MOST HIGH DETERMINES THE TIMES BEFORE

APPOINTED TO NATIONS AND THE BOUNDS

OF THEIR HABITATION.

Each nation's "development in space and time," to speak in the style of Neander, "is fixed by God's all-governing wisdom." We are told in the Old Testament that "the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance when he separated the sons of Adam." Indeed, throughout the word of God, the exaltation and depression of nations, their eras and locations, are so uniformly ascribed to Divine Providence that further quotation is needless.

The rise of the Medo-Persian, the Macedo-Grecian and the Roman empires, was not only pre-determined but foreshown. Yet on what striking providences was the existence of each of those empires to depend. Had Cyrus never been born or had he died in his first battle, when so many others fell, where would have been the kingdom of the Medes and Persians? What if Alexander the Great had perished at the Granicus instead of marvellously escaping death? But he was not to fall there. In the plan of the Controller of events his empire had been mapped out, the time to take possession had come and his work was not yet done. And how many hair-breadth escapes had Rome. Once the question of "to be or not to be" for that mighty commonwealth, whose ultimate terribleness and grandeur tasked the powers of prophetic description, and whose influence is even now felt in many ways throughout the civilized world, turned on an event almost too trifling to be named—the cackling of a goose. The forthcoming too of Mohammedanism, also a subject of prophecy, ages before its baleful advent—yes, of that strange empire of scimitar and Koran, whose times were to be so many centuries, and whose habitation so large and fair a portion of the earth, once hung on the flight of a bird. A thousand years before the fall of the Roman Empire of the West, it was announced that ten kingdoms were to take its place. At the time of this announcement the forefathers of those who were to compose the ten kingdoms were but feeble and scattered tribes on the

great plateau of Central and Northern Asia, and North-Eastern Europe. What led these tribes, increased as they were in the intervening centuries, and flowing down upon the provinces of Western and Southern Europe, to take their positions in the number foretold in the prophecy? For ages they had moved hither and thither like the billows on an agitated ocean; and they poured themselves with barbarous violence upon the territories of the falling Empire; and yet they came to their places on the map of Europe according to the times before appointed, and within bounds of habitation previously set. Even from Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, it is easy to perceive that, on several occasions, the frustration of that plan was prevented only by events which to human foresight, were very improbable—by Providential interpositions which are now very distinct to all who are willing to see God in the history of a world made for his own glory;—for example, at one time by rolling back the tide of Attila's victories; at another, by raising up Charles Martel, with genius and power, to defeat the hitherto invincible Saracens, when from the conquest of Western Asia, Northern Africa, Spain, and South-Western France, they seemed about to sweep like a resistless whirlwind across trembling Europe.

The two great truths that the God of the Bible is the Friend of true liberty, and also the Arbiter of the times and bounds of nations, should incite us to recognise His providence, so visible in the history of our own country.

On this day of Thanksgiving to the Most High for Blessings such as no other nation enjoys, it becomes us to consider well the source of our free institutions, and the cause of our national prosperity. Shall we in our hearts give the glory to men? Shall we, like the Epicureans, deem it beneath the dignity or inconsistent with the pleasure of the Deity to maintain a providential government in this world? Or like the Stoics resolve the powers of the Father of Lights, into laws of Nature or Fate, incompatible with His control over events? Such impious folly was rebuked by the Divine Spirit on Mars' Hill: it has not grown into wisdom since.

Let not the agency of God, then, be overlooked. For without a distinct and grateful recognition of the Most High in our unparalleled prosperity, the setting apart of this day for Thanksgiving, by so many of the States of this Union, is but solemn mockery and atheistic self-exaltation.

In inviting your attention to

THE INDICATIONS OF A DIVINE PURPOSE TO MAKE OUR  
COUNTRY A MODEL CHRISTIAN REPUBLIC,

I take the attitude not of undoubting conviction, but of hopeful inquiry. The two great truths under whose light we now proceed, forbid us to regard the existence of such a purpose as incredible; and the indications of the reality of its existence, are too many and too strong to be overcome by any visible opposite signs. God seems to have designed to render our country free and prosperous through the institutions

of Christianity; and thus a medium of blessings to the world. The history of the past and the intimations of the present better harmonize with the supposition of such a purpose than with any other hypothesis.

With this thought in view let us consider

THE FITNESS OF OUR HABITATION FOR SUCH A PURPOSE.

Behold the noble land which we call our own. Had a delegation of angels from Heaven surveyed the whole surface of the earth to find the best place for a Christian commonwealth, where could they have found another so suitable as this? Placed between the two great oceans, and extending from the beautiful border of lakes far away to the Mexican Gulf and the regions of gold and eternal verdure—thus embracing every variety of climate and soil; its coasts indented with excellent harbors; its surface marked in every direction with streamlets and rivers, and diversified with mountains, hills, valleys and plains, full of mineral and vegetable riches, it was admirably adapted to be the abode of a great nation of Christian freemen. The land was almost unoccupied. No Aztec or Peruvian empire was here with its pernicious customs and its degraded people, to hinder the establishment of good institutions, and the few savages dwelling or wandering within the bounds of our habitation would not corrupt by their example nor obstruct by their influence or power.

Touching the place selected for this Republic, two things deserve especial notice.



First, its SPACIOUSNESS. This, by rendering the land cheap, leads an unusually large proportion of the inhabitants to become owners of real estate, and thus deeply interested in the permanent welfare of the country. It tends also—under the influence of Christianity—to foster the spirit of true independence among the millions. Without reference to the aims of “land-reformers,” we should acknowledge the kindness and wisdom of the Most High in so ordering it that a large majority of the people may be owners of the soil. Any nation is in peril of discontent, of demoralization, and of changes without improvement, where the land is owned by a few.

But this vast amplitude of space would naturally be attended with the danger of a distracting diversity of sectional interests. Now mark how this evil has been obviated. The original settlement of our country by separate colonies—the germs of states—was an arrangement, not of human forecast, but of Divine Providence. It prepared the way for local legislation by state governments.

The interpositions, too, by which the opposite extremities of the Union, though becoming more and more remote, have been for practical purposes, brought nearer and nearer to each other, challenge our grateful attention. In 1803, the vast territory of Louisiana was acquired, in spite of no slight expressions of alarm at so great an extension of the bounds of our habitation. But at that very time Robert Fulton was far advanced in experiments which were to result only four years afterwards in the application of a power by

which floating palaces—ships of vast burden—would be moved up our great rivers, against wind and tide, and New Orleans soon be brought into the neighborhood of Pittsburg.

The more recent extension of our bounds by the annexation of Texas, California, and other distant territories, occurred just after the introduction of Rail-Roads, Atlantic-Steam Navigation, and the Telegraph. Now, San Francisco is nearer to Washington than Albany was in 1806, and soon the shore of the Pacific will be nearer to Plymouth Rock and Bunker-Hill than the western part of New England was at the time of the Revolution.

Who will deny that these improvements in locomotion and intercommunication, so occurring, have been most opportune?

The other thing to be especially noticed of our habitation is

ITS SEPARATION, BY THE OCEAN, FROM ALL THE OTHER  
GREAT COUNTRIES OF THE EARTH.

This aided our fathers greatly in the days of the Colonies, in preserving their rights, and in laying good foundations of States; it enabled them, under the smiles of Providence, to achieve their independence; and it has eminently conduced to our welfare since. Suppose this nation to have been located in any part of Europe during the last sixty years. A large standing army would have been always necessary; taxation such as the natives of this country never endured, would have distressed us; in the absence of the means of spiritual and intellectual culture, we should have

lost our mental freedom, and been led to sacrifice true liberty and solid prosperity on the altar of a false national grandeur; the lava of the French Revolution—whose ashes and cinders were thrown upon our shores even across the Atlantic—would have rolled red-hot over us; and if, as a Republic, we had survived the fall of Napoleon, the sovereigns of the Holy Alliance would have assailed us with their eight-hundred-thousand armed men, terrible from the fields of Talavera, Leipsic and Waterloo, instead of scowling impotently at us across the ocean.

Great Britain's Channel, with her matchless navy, has served in no small degree to relieve her of the dangerous necessity of a large military force at home, and thus to render her the freest country in the European world. But better far to us has been "the great and wide Sea." It has placed us at a still greater remove from belligerent neighbors, and from the ills of a warlike, burdened and degraded people. Steam navigation has indeed of late narrowed the Atlantic wonderfully. How have the shores of Europe and America approached each other since 1775! Then Mr. Burke said in reference to a scheme for the representation of the American Colonies in Parliament, "Perhaps I might be inclined to entertain some such thought; but a great flood stops me in my course. *Opposuit natura*—I cannot remove the eternal barriers of the Creation." He had just before said: "The ocean remains. You cannot pump this dry; and as long as it continues in its present bed, so long all the causes which weaken authority by distance, will continue." Those

barriers have proved to be not quite "eternal." For though the ocean has not been "pumped"—though the "great flood" remains—arrangements have already been devised, by which representatives might go from this country to the British Parliament in less time than some of the very members whom he was then addressing, had taken in coming from their homes to London.

It is remarkable, however, that the distance between the two continents remained just long enough. It continued till after the Revolution; till the Napoleonic drama was over; till our institutions had had time to take deep root and our national character was formed and established; and till our country had been recognized by friends and foes, as one of the mightiest powers of the earth. It continued during our infancy and youth, and was not thus removed, until the time had come for us to fulfill more efficiently than ever before, our mission of diffusing the light of the Gospel over the earth, and the influence of our republican example among the nations. It is well for us now to be nearer to the rest of the world, to look the human family more familiarly in the face;—and, in respect to some of our faults, to hear more distinctly the lamentations of the friends of liberty in Europe, and the very taunts and jeers of aristocrats and monarchists who feel comforted by our inconsistencies. It will henceforth do us no harm to be in a situation both to act and to be acted upon more potently in the war of opinions and the struggle of influences, with which the literary, the political and the religious world is agitated.

Thus it is apparent that in respect to the extent and location of our habitation, and to the method of giving us the benefits without the evils of an extended territory, and the advantages of an isolated position so long and only so long as it was needful, the Most High has directed events as if with the purpose of making this land the abode of a free and Christian nation. Keeping this purpose still in view, we proceed now to consider

#### GOD'S TIME AND MANNER OF PEOPLING THIS COUNTRY.

The time chosen for establishing here, those Colonies which were to give character to the Republic, was the century beginning in 1620\*. This period, you will observe, commences a hundred and twenty-eight years after the discovery of America. It is a remarkable fact that He who "determines the times before appointed" to nations, kept our "habitation" almost entirely unoccupied by any colony or association of civilized men for more than a century and a quarter after that discovery. The streams of emigration from the Old World flowed swift and large to other parts of America during that period, but not to this. Happily, indeed, the region to be meted out to the original States of this Union, fell within the domain of English discovery; and British ships, like "guardian giants," passed from time to time along the shore. Various attempts of Europeans to colonize this part of North America resulted with scarcely an exception, in total failure. This

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\* Until 1620, the Colony at Jamestown consisted almost entirely of *men*, who intended to return to England.



was well for us and for the world. The men and women to lay the foundations of a Christian commonwealth, had not then been made ready. The period reaching from 1492 to 1620, was a necessary period of moral and intellectual preparation. Suppose that colonies had been established here immediately after this continent became known to Europeans. What country could have sent out a people fitted for the great purpose? England might have sent such as bowed low to the sceptre of Henry the Seventh, and still lower to the sceptre of Henry the Eighth. Scotland, then the home of superstition and barbarism, might have given the New World, minions of despotism and fierce, untutored clans. Holland, not yet Protestant, might have furnished a people who had learned to resist the encroachments of the sea, but not the tyranny of hierarchs and kings. France might have bestowed as stupid and priest-ridden a people as she sent to the valley of the St. Lawrence. And Spain could have transmitted men and women like those whose descendents in Mexico and in Central and South America, are so much pitied or scorned by the civilized world. Germany and the Scandinavian countries were then in "the hour and power of darkness" that preceded the day. The hundred and twenty-eight years which intervened between the great discovery by Columbus and the landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth-Rock, were years of a grand religious and literary revival, of a wonderful ecclesiastical and political revolution. The success of Columbus, fitted of itself to awaken the people of Europe to new trains of thought and new pursuits, had been preceded

by the invention of printing and by an unwonted attention to the Greek literature—occasioned by the resort to Italy and to other parts of Europe, of scholars who had fled from Constantinople when it was taken by the Turks. This avidity in the pursuit of the Greek literature, prepared the way for the successful study of the New Testament, and thus excited a sense of the importance of the Hebrew Scriptures; whilst the art of printing opened a channel for the communication of Divine truth to multitudes heretofore inaccessible.

Seventy-five years after this great invention, sixty-four after the fall of the Greek Empire, and twenty-five after the discovery of America, Luther blew the first trumpet blast of the Reformation. The stone was now rolled away from the door of the sepulchre, where Christ in the buried Scriptures, had long lain hidden from the great majority in nominal Christendom. The great Liberator—the eternal Word who exalted humanity by becoming the Son of Man—came forth to the view of the ignorant, the superstitious, the servile, full of grace and truth to make them free indeed. His voice was a voice of resurrection in the charnel-house of European mind; and anon millions awoke, who had been blind, deaf, dead to rights, duties and interests of the highest moment. Men began to see that religion is no affair to be committed to creatures impiously claiming to be priests—sacrificers of the Lamb of God and conscience-keepers of Christians—but a thing of the individual soul looking to the Most High through the One Mediator. Thus they began to realize the right and the responsibility of private judgment, and the depravity of the character

of man as the Gospel finds it, and the grandeur of his nature as both his creation and his redemption, declare it. Hence the Reformation as commenced by Luther, but far more as carried forward by Calvin and others of a like republicanizing faith, operated at once to exalt God in human view, and to expel all degrading veneration of men. It involved a great popular uprising. Mountains on the surface of society seemed to sink as the valleys were raised. Thrones and hierarchies were shaken. In Great Britain, the North of Ireland, Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Holland, "the entrance of God's word" proved on a grand scale its adaptation to give light—to give understanding unto the simple. "The diffusion of light and knowledge" in England "from Edward VI to the Restoration was as wonderful", says Coleridge, "as it is praiseworthy, and may be justly placed among the most remarkable facts of history." Even in 1620 a great improvement had been made in the character especially of the lower and middling classes.

The century following was the period when the people whom God was thus training, were to come over, bringing in their hearts the principles and exhibiting in their lives the virtues which, under the Divine blessing, were to make our country great, prosperous and free. How happened it that men and women of all the European world, the very best to found a Christian commonwealth, were separated from the communities where they dwelt and sent to their prepared habitation. The fact is easily explained. The princes and prelates of Europe endeavored to arrest the progress of the Reformation by persecution. Dig-

nitaries in state and church who loved place and power more than truth and human welfare, turned pale at the earthquake-march of revolution; and the visions of a new order of ages when Theocracy and Democracy would be inaugurated and established, alarmed them and made them cruel. The people, of all others, the most needed here were not loved there. The eaglets were fitted to come and soar in the light and air of skies new and clear; and their nests were stirred up with a violence that drove them forth. Neither the limits nor the plan of this discourse will permit a description in detail of the cruelties and outrages by which so many of the excellent of the earth were driven to our shores. The fact itself however—shining as it does in the light of other significant facts—strikingly illustrates our theme.

Our great historian, Bancroft, speaking of the founders of the first twelve of our States—the twelve whose character was destined to shape the character of the whole country—says, "Our fathers were not only Christians; they were even in Maryland by a vast majority, elsewhere almost unanimously Protestants. Now the Protestant reformation—considered in its largest influence on politics—was the common people awakening to freedom of mind." The first emigrants to this country were Divinely chosen from the best nations of Europe, and were mostly of the Anglo-Saxon and other branches of the great Germanic family.

I state a simple historical fact—a fact largely dwelt upon even by writers not at all partial to the theological views of the great Genevan reformer—when I add that in the most flourishing and influential Colonies,



they were chiefly Calvinists. Accordingly, they were not only zealous for liberty but for those institutions which tend to qualify a nation to maintain it; I refer, for example, to the Christian Sabbath; a learned, able and pious ministry of the Gospel; colleges to educate teachers and professional men of every needful description; and last but not least, schools of a high order for the mass of the people. In Massachusetts as early as 1636 "the General Court voted a sum equal to a year's rate of the whole Colony towards the erection of a College." In the Plymouth Colony in 1642 legal provision was made against suffering the "barbarism" to exist in any family of not teaching their children and apprentices "perfectly to read the English tongue." "Calvinism," says the historian just now quoted, "invoked intelligence against Satan, the great destroyer of the human race; and the farmers and seamen of Massachusetts nourished its College with corn and strings of wampum, and in every village built the free school." The Independents, the Presbyterians, the Puritans all, the Hollanders of Genevan views, and the Huguenots had been trained amid influences prompting to profound and lofty thought. They had been nurtured under a Divine tuition which has made Scotland a luminary to Christendom, which revolutionized and aggrandized England, which prepared Holland not only to abide like the unconsumed burning bush, through all the fires of her struggle with the terrible might and demon-cruelty of Spain, but to fill the world with the monuments of her learning and her commercial enterprise, and which gave to France not only the names



of Calvin, Farel and Colligni, but myriads of martyr-souls, whose loud voice crying from "under the altar: How long, O Lord, holy, just and true?"—is speeding the day when it shall be changed into a song of jubilee, over ecclesiastical tyranny extinct, infidelity abhorred and a great nation regenerated. On an average the founders of the original states of this Union were more intelligent and virtuous by far than the mass of the people in any part of Europe even at this day. I do not affirm that they were free altogether from human infirmity, or that they were from the first, familiar with all the needful applications of their own principles. The Protestant world had then just awaked as from the sleep of death. The Lord had spoken the life-giving word and Lazarus had come forth from the tomb, though with some of his grave-clothes still adhering to him. But with such power of life and love of free action, he was soon loosed from what was no longer his own. The intolerance which our fathers had learned in another school and which they allowed even temporarily in a less degree than the rest of the world, was never in accordance with the great truths of their creed, and was soon laid aside.

I am here reminded of the boast of Roman Catholics—the emptiness of which is not so well understood even among people of other creeds as it ought to be—that the first example of toleration in this country, was set in Maryland. I would detract nothing from the real merits of Lord Baltimore. But it is due to truth to inquire who he was and in what

circumstances the famous charter of toleration—so called—was granted to him. Lord Baltimore was the subject of a Protestant Government. He obtained his charter of a king who with his privy council, had promised to oppose Popery, and the vast majority of whose subjects were zealous Protestants; and he obtained it for a colony to consist in part of Protestants and to be located in the midst of colonies who abhorred Romanism. The truth is that Lord Baltimore and his Roman Catholic associates were themselves the tolerated—not the tolerators. Would it, then, have been quite amiable or even prudent for him to ask a charter otherwise than tolerant to the religious faith of the very Government from which he was seeking it? If his charter had been obtained of the king of Spain or Portugal for a colony to be planted in Central or South America, it would have been a far less equivocal proof of Roman Catholic tolerance. As an individual, Lord Baltimore was worthy of high esteem; and it is not unpleasant to know that he was so liberally treated by a Protestant government, and that in the colonization of this country, some of almost every shade of religious belief came here; the way being thus prepared for a splendid national example of all varieties and contrarieties of faith peacefully co-existing. Let the Disposer of events be thanked for the arrangement that gave us the Calverts and Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

Now shall we deem it accidental that our land was peopled thus at the beginning?—that it remained a wilderness until men and women of the right

character to found a Christian commonwealth, were trained?—and that when fitted for their noble work they were separated from the surrounding populations and sent here? It is more rational after the manner of the Psalmist to say: THOU hast brought a vine out of Europe and hast planted it. THOU preparedst room before it and didst cause it to take deep root and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.

And how shall we construe

#### THE FACTS OF OUR COLONIAL AND REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY?

Was it by mere fortuity that the colonies flourished with a growth and prosperity which in 1760 and especially in 1775 excited the admiration of British statesmen and of French philosophers?—that neither savage foes nor civilized enemies succeeded in attempts to destroy or subjugate them?—that they were made conscious of their power by the French war just before the mother country resolved to tax and oppress them?—that the character of Washington was formed at the time of need; his precious life strangely preserved in the dark day of Braddock's defeat, and his exalted worth made conspicuous in season to attract the attention of the nation and prepare them to confide in him in the tremendous crisis of the Revolution?—that Robert Clive, the brilliant captor and defender of Arcot, the hero of Plassey and ablest general of Europe failed to take the command of the British troops sent against

us in that struggle,—perishing by his own hand and giving place to the dilatory and blundering Sir Henry Clinton?—that Major Andre in a critical moment lost his wits, and balked the treason of Arnold?—that the envious rivalry of France towards England, moved her, though then monarchical, to aid us in maintaining such a Declaration of Independence?

Let us adore the God of Providence, and love the country which He has so cherished and blessed. Our fathers devoutly waited upon Him when they came into the wilderness for freedom to worship Him. They trusted Him in the days when the savage tribes were terrible and they were weak. They sought His interposition with prayer and fasting when Great Britain and France were battling for empire in North America, and hostile armaments were threatening their destruction.\* They asked His guidance in the times of the Stamp Act and the Tea Act; and they besought His help while they echoed from all their hills and valleys and plains, the Declaration of Independence. They observed days of public humiliation and supplication to avert His wrath and seek His favor when calamity and

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\* Says Pres. Dwight: "*The destruction of the French armament under the Duke d'Anville, in the year 1746, ought to be remembered with gratitude and admiration by every inhabitant of this country. This fleet consisted of forty ships of war; was destined for the destruction of New England; was of sufficient force to render that destruction, in the ordinary progress of things, certain; sailed from Chebucto in Nova Scotia, for this purpose; and was entirely destroyed, on the night following a general fast throughout New England, by a terrible tempest.*"—Sermon CXLII. Pres. Edwards mentions this with several other thankworthy providences of his times.—Works, Vol III, 489, 490, N. Y., 1830.



danger gloomed over the land. Their hearts leaped with gratitude to Him when they heard that Burgoyne, with all his army, was captured; and they wept tears of devout acknowledgment when the flying horsemen shouted at their doors, "Cornwallis has surrendered."

With minds still upon the Divine purpose to make our Country a Christian Republic, let us consider

THE ERA IN THE WORLD'S PROGRESS, AT WHICH THIS NATION ENTERED UPON ITS CAREER OF INDEPENDENCE.

Our fathers of the Revolution acted amid lights which a long and ascending series of dispensations and epochs had been multiplying and brightening—lights eminently fitting their day to be the era of a new manifestation of the power of Christianity—its power to make nations capable of self-government. For them poets, historians and philosophers representing many classes of men and various forms of civilization, had written; for them republics, ancient and modern, had tried the experiment of popular institutions, and empires and kingdoms from the days of Nimrod, been sounding out their warnings; for them the principles of the Civil and the Common Law had been elaborated and collected, and a great variety of governmental theories been put to the proof; for them the Oracles of God had been given, the Messiah lived, died and risen, the Hebrew Commonwealth flourished and passed away and the Church—under her latest dispensation—for more than seventeen centuries, declared her lessons and



defied the gates of hell ; for them, in short, the almost six thousand years of a wonderfully varied and suggestive past had come and gone, "uttering speech" and "showing knowledge." Nor were our fathers, like the revolutionists and law-givers of other times and other localities, fatally embarrassed by the rubbish of hurtful and inveterate customs. On an open field and amid the grand and diversified scenery of their secluded but magnificent habitation, they could lay political foundations according to the dictates of enlightened reason. It has often and justly been remarked that the French Revolution providentially conferred a great benefit by overthrowing institutions inherited from ages of venerated barbarism. Yet in respect to facilities for true progress, a long series of revolutions and changes must still take place before the most favored country of Europe will be put on a level with this nation even as it was in 1776.

The time when this Republic entered upon its career of independence was felicitous also in its relation to the future. An era of great discoveries and improvements was just dawning like

—"another morn  
Rising on mid-noon."—

It was close to the times of Robert Raikes, Noah Webster and the outgoings of Popular Education. It was near the end of the century when Franklin tamed the lightning, and near the beginning of the century when Morse was to gift it with tongues and

make it a bearer of messages—counting even the space-annihilating locomotive slow. It was when many new departments of science were coming into notice and when all branches of knowledge—however barren hitherto—were blossoming unto a wonderful fruitage of applications to the arts. It was when the deadly influence of infidelity on free institutions, was about to be held up for our warning in France, and of Popery in the Spanish-American Republics. And it was when the adaptation of Christianity—through the power of its Divine Author—to overcome all obstacles to its universal triumph, was soon to be signally displayed more and more in the wonders of grand religious awakenings and in the glories of modern missions. Now to what do all these indications, looking the same way, point? God has joined the present to the past and both to the future. Let us therefore endeavor to interpret in the light of the past,

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES IN THEIR BEARINGS ON OUR  
COUNTRY'S FUTURE.

Let us view passing events in their connection with the whole course of the Commonwealth's history. Thus may

“We see which way the stream of time doth run,”

not judging of the direction of the main current, from the counter-movements of mere eddies and ripples, which are apt to appear vast and controlling to those who are in the midst of them. Some of God's interpositions in our own times, in admirable harmony with

his supposed purpose to make this nation Christian and free, have already been mentioned. Has anything transpired during the present century of such tremendous and far-reaching power of evil as to cast all the cheering signs of that purpose, into the shade? Is it surmised that Christianity is *dying out in our country*? The surmise is groundless. It is the offspring either of a desire to have it so, or of a propensity "unwisely" to assume that "the former days were better than these." Statistics show that the increase in the number of evangelical Christians from the year 1800 to the year 1850, was more than ten fold, while the increase of the whole population of the United States was less than five fold. The material and intellectual resources of Christianity have multiplied still faster. Among men of education, talent, wealth and high social position, the Bible is more generally revered now than it was thirty years ago, and far more than it was sixty years since—when the illustrious Dwight entered upon the presidency of Yale College.

Is it said that "*a great flood of immigration is rolling in upon us?*" But when is this occurring? When the Americans are not blind to its tendencies, nor asleep to their consequent duties, and when God has provided us with the means of warding off its perils, and of converting it into a blessing. Look at our constantly improving system of Free Schools—regarded with increasing favor throughout the country; at our Colleges and Seminaries—cherished in the newer as well as in the older States; at the numerous Societies and Agencies for evangelizing and enlightening all the

inhabitants of the land whether native or foreign—sustained with a growing liberality, and attended with an encouraging success; and at the accessibleness of the almost entire population to some form, and generally to every form of evangelical instruction—rendered more and more unobstructed every year by all the tendencies of American society and of American institutions. The very States and Territories which, a short time since, seemed to be the most likely to be abandoned to irreligion and barbarism, are calling with loud voices and even with liberal hands, for the Gospel and for Christian schools. Meanwhile the Most High is giving us the gold of California, the riches of silver, copper, lead, iron and coal mines, the avails of flourishing agriculture, encouraged manufactures and spreading commerce. Is he bestowing this wealth to corrupt us and our children? or to fill the land with light and knowledge?

In calculating the influence of immigration upon the future character and welfare of the nation it behooves us to make large account of the peculiar type of American Christianity. My hope for our country is not merely nor mainly in the location, extent and excellence of our territorial habitation, and the abundance of our material resources; nor in the Anglo-Saxon element of the population, even with our increasing means of intellectual culture, our liberty of thought and of utterance, and the tendencies of our civil institutions. The history of mankind and the word of God warn us against such a reliance. My confidence is in the religion of the Bible—operating in



such a field, at such an era, on such minds, through such means, and amid such institutions. That religion, in its revealed truths and principles, is, of course the same everywhere and always. But Christian character, in different ages and nations, often exhibits no small varieties of development. That character, viewed as distinctively American, is eminently practical:—bold, prompt and skilful in using means to convert men to its own standard of faith and practice. It is highly intellectual, too:—fond of tracing out great principles, and, because practical, earnest in “proving all things,” searching, in an atmosphere of light, for the proper ends, ways and grounds of action. It is remarkably educational also:—erecting colleges, planting schools, publishing books, diffusing knowledge, and aiming to exercise a plastic, elevating, unitive power over all the heterogeneous elements of our population. Nor is American Christianity losing this characteristic. Significant facts prove the reverse. The demand for an intelligent ministry, and for well qualified teachers at the North, South, East and West, is more and more urgent and uncompromising. Even those denominations of Protestants who once depreciated a liberal education for the work of preaching the Gospel, are, to a greater or a less extent, nobly acknowledging their error in this respect. EDUCATE, EDUCATE, is the motto to the adoption of which nearly all the circumstances and tendencies of American piety and American civilization, are prompting, aye, driving the great mass of the nation. Hence American Christianity—with its accompaniments—is exceedingly



AMERICANIZING :—retentive of its own essential qualities, and powerful to assimilate all the inhabitants of the land to the national type of character and thus to one another. Having moulded the founders of the States, it is still mightier now with its glorious history, its multiplying facilities and cheering prospects, to fashion those who come under our institutions, after the same model. But what merits especial notice in American Christianity, is the expectation and frequent enjoyment of extraordinary effusions of the Holy Spirit, or, as some would say, its revival character. Neither the moral nor the political history of the United States can be fully written without a large and emphatic notice of the great religious awakenings in which mighty changes have often been wrought in townships, villages, cities and even states. The memorable exercise of the Divine Spirit's power in the days of Edwards, Whitfield, the Tennents and Samuel Davies, not only increased vastly the number of earnest, intelligent Christians throughout the Colonies, but contributed immensely to prepare the mass of the people to assert and achieve their independence. The converts in that series of spiritual wonders, were not Tories but Whigs to a man and to a woman. Lord Cornwallis in his plan of campaign in the South, marked the places occupied by such persons as, of course, full of rebels : and men of a like religious faith, in the Middle and Eastern States, were of the same politics. Need I speak of the displays of God's saving power which have been granted, with increasing frequency, since? How often have times of religious declension been suddenly succeeded by times when the attention of multitudes was put un-

der arrest, the eyes of their understanding being opened to behold wonderful things out of the Divine law, and their souls purified in obeying the truth through the Spirit. By these great awakenings the number of Christian teachers has been largely increased; new fountains of benevolence been opened; the means of a thoroughly humanizing culture vastly multiplied; and the best elements of true civilization introduced into circles and localities full of influences baneful to the Republic. It is not too much to say that another display of the Holy Spirit's power, as much greater than that of 1740 or that of 1831 as the resources of the Church are now more abundant, the statistics of moral evil more clearly brought to view, and God's grand cure for sin more demonstratively illustrated, would put a new face upon society throughout the land. Nor are the energies of the Holy One exhausted. He is eternal and almighty. His promises and the analogies of his providence towards this nation should awaken strong hope. According to a lucid series of inspired announcements, times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, are to be granted yet more and more; and the fall of that system of ecclesiastical despotism whose sway over a part of our population, excites dread, is not far off. Brighter days for the Church and the world are heralded by signs visible to many an eye on the out-look from the watch-tower of prophecy. Let us not despair, then, of the moral elevation and the assimilation of the people of this country. The obstacles to mental intercourse and to mutual knowledge, arising from diversity of nationality, language and religious creed, are over-

come here with a rapidity unparalleled in the world's social history. Under the operation of measures likely to be employed with increasing prudence and philanthropy, the mixture of population, promises to be the occasion of great intellectual activity and breadth of views, and to produce a national character into which mainly the best elements of the whole human family shall enter, and be moulded under the genial influence of a liberty whose parent is Christianity, and whose life is virtue and intelligence.

More than a century ago, Berkeley and Edwards, from their different view-points, caught a glimpse of the high destination of this country. How faint were the intimations of that destination then discernible, compared with the evidences which have since appeared! All the signs which they beheld have only grown more distinct and cheering as time has brought other and brighter indications. In the light of these facts, let us now turn our attention for a few moments to

#### THE DARKEST SOCIAL EVIL OF OUR COUNTRY.

In respect to the removal of this evil, I am prepared to say that my hopes are far greater than my fears. The introduction of slavery in connection with all the peculiar blessings marking our history, is indeed a most mysterious event. But let not despondency nor impatience darken our interpretation of it. To say nothing of its relation to the future evangelization of Africa—a topic reminding of the vast circles of a Providence symbolized by “rings” of ever-moving “wheels, so high that they are dreadful”—and to speak of its connection

simply with the Divine purpose towards our own country, I venture to suggest that one of the ends for which slavery was suffered to be introduced here, was to try the heart of the nation. Some form of trial, ever since the planting of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in Eden, has accompanied the grant of blessings to man. As a nation, we have declared as self-evident, the truth that "all men are created equal." To test our sincerity, what has the Disposer of events done? He has placed among us, men, not of the high Norman class, nor of the Celtic or Slavonian race, but of the outcast Ethiopian variety; men, to regard whom as equals, we must fall back upon first principles and keep fresh in view the grand truths which lie at the foundation of our political system. Hence we are ever driven to the study of human rights, not as a pastime, not as an exercise ending in wordy display, but as a labor taking hold on our national life and destiny, and requiring in us, all the strength of settled principle and living faith. The Father of the spirits of all flesh, seems to be saying to every American citizen: "Dost thou believe that all men are created equal? Then show thy faith by thy works towards this despised people." In no other country under the sun could slavery appear so hatefully anomalous as it does here contrasted with the institutions and exposed to the lights of a free, practical, all-illuminating Christianity, and of a democratic-republican confession of political faith; and I trust that He who has ordered the circumstances of our trial so favorably, will give us grace to pass through it without fatal disaster. The signs of the times suggest anything but despair.



The Bible, the conscience of the moral universe and the prayers of all who say "THY will be done in earth as it is in heaven," are against slavery. The living literature of the world—in the books, the speeches, the essays, the hymns and songs which the thrilled, responsive heart of Christendom will not permit to die—is freedom's voice. The imperishable memorials of prophets, reformers and sainted philanthropists who projected themselves far into the future, pioneering the world by noble thoughts and deeds, are helping to swell into an irresistible flood, the current of influences hostile to oppression. The most honored names of the American heroic age—names that shine "as pure stars fixed there in the firmament at which the great and high of all ages kindle themselves," are recorded against slavery.

In the meantime the rapid increase of free population and the course of emigration, are against it. The economical, educational and social interests of the nation are against it; and some of the very vices which it fearfully fosters, are hastening its overthrow. Even things which men supposed would strengthen it, have been turned against it:—the annexation of Texas, awakening a hostility to it not easily allayed; the acquisition of California, resulting providentially and most unexpectedly in the addition of a Free State; the passage of the Fugitive Slave bill, greatly increasing the anti-slavery feeling of the North, and now denounced even in South Carolina as worse than useless to slaveholders; and the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, already regarded by men of all parties, as fraught with death



rather than life to the institution which seems ready, more and more, to provoke the opposition of heaven and earth.

Nor ought we to forget that there are many in the Slave States who are nobly endeavoring, to the extent of their ability, to Christianize and befriend those who are held in bonds. More has been done within the last thirty years at the South as well as at the North, for the elevation of the colored population than had been effected in a century before.

The evils of slavery can be checked and removed without violating the Constitution or dissolving the Union. As to the Constitution—it should be remembered that its framers, as well from the South as the North, regarded slavery as an evil soon to pass away; and they were unwilling even to name it in the great, organic law of the land. The articles in that instrument relating to slavery, were evidently intended modestly to cover it, till it should die. Their own statement of their views and aims, proves that they had no thought of making the Constitution itself, a formidable fortress for the protection and extension of the institution which they denounced,—a fortress overlooking and, with ceaseless display of fire and thunder, endangering the very temple of liberty which they sought to guard and perpetuate.

The people of this country, by a vast majority, will cling to the Union. The Colonial and Revolutionary fathers, the old altars to liberty at Bunker-Hill, Saratoga and Yorktown, and the dust at Mt.

Vernon, are the inheritance of the North and the South, of the East and the West, and are strong to keep us one. The rail-roads traversing the whole land and making all the inhabitants thereof near neighbors, are ribs of iron binding the States together ; and the Mississippi river is a perpetual veto of attempts to dissolve the Union. The great North-West, with its millions of freemen, will never permit the mouth of that river to be held by a foreign power.

Such are the signs hung out from Heaven to cheer and direct us, reminding of high privileges and momentous duties. The friends of religious and civil liberty throughout the world, have a right to look to us for an example which shall rain emancipating influences on the nations of the earth. Shall they look in vain ? Heaven forbid ! If our country, so located and so peopled, so happy in its time of colonization and in its era of independence, so protected against perils and so cherished with benign interpositions, so provided with the means of moral and intellectual culture, and so favored with effusions of the Holy Spirit, is not to be, more and more, Christian, free and great—then “the handwriting abroad on the sky” means less than it seems to promise. No other commonwealth was ever so favorably situated. Examples of fallen republics, however numerous and however full of warnings against idolatry, atheism, hypocrisy, superstition, covetousness, ambition and sensuality, fail to evince that this country, with its Christian institu-

tions and educational appliances, and with its grand peculiarities of history and of prospect, is destined to the same end. This world's future is not to be a mere repetition of its past. The powers and influences of the Kingdom of Christ, are abroad in the earth, forbidding that the reign of moral darkness and ruin, shall be perpetual. The history of this world in its ultimate purport, is the history of Redemption; and our place on the chart of time and our part in the drama of Deliverance is unlike the place or part of any other nation. Our country started on its course in an auspicious day and under an auspicious sky. The Ages seem to have come with their gifts and salutations to the new Republic, like the wise men from the hoary East, hailing the advent of Him on whose reign better times were waiting. Those who with their prayers and tears and blood, laid the foundations on which it is our privilege to build, were men of faith; and they compass us about to-day as a cloud of witnesses, bidding us labor in hope. And a Greater—even He whose truth is to make all nations free—is saying to our whole American Zion, Arise, Shine.







H 19 89.1









